



Strategic Educational Planning at Pondok Pesantren Minhajul Haq Purwakarta in Improving Institutional Quality and Competitiveness

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ABSTRACT. This study aims to analyze the strategic educational planning implemented at Pondok Pesantren Minhajul Haq Purwakarta and its contribution to improving institutional quality and competitiveness. Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews with key informants (foundation leaders, madrasah principals, curriculum coordinators, and senior teachers), participatory observation, and document analysis. The findings reveal that strategic planning is formulated participatively and grounded in the institutional vision of producing comprehensive Muslims (muslim kaffah) who are globally oriented, independent, and excellent in Islamic sciences and Arabic language. The main strategies include integrated curriculum development (formal, diniyah, and tahfidz), implementation of a quality management system oriented toward ISO 9001:2015 standards, continuous human resource capacity building, and strengthening of flagship programs (Markaz Tahfizh and Markaz Syariah). These strategies have contributed to the achievement of A accreditation, increased student enrollment, improved student achievements in tahfidz and academic competitions, and enhanced institutional competitiveness at the regional level. Challenges remain in professional human resource availability and financial efficiency. The study recommends strengthening data-based monitoring and evaluation systems as well as diversifying funding sources to ensure the sustainability of strategic initiatives.

Keywords: Strategic Planning; Educational Quality; Institutional Competitiveness; Islamic boarding school; Pondok Pesantren Minhajul Haq

ABSTRAK. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis perencanaan strategis pendidikan di Pondok Pesantren Minhajul Haq Purwakarta serta kontribusinya terhadap peningkatan mutu dan daya saing lembaga. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan informan kunci (pimpinan yayasan, kepala madrasah, koordinator kurikulum, dan ustadz senior), observasi partisipatif, serta analisis dokumen. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perencanaan strategis disusun secara partisipatif dan berlandaskan visi lembaga untuk mencetak muslim kaffah yang berwawasan global, mandiri, serta unggul di bidang syar'i dan bahasa Arab. Strategi utama mencakup pengembangan kurikulum terintegrasi (formal, diniyah, dan tahfidz), penerapan sistem manajemen mutu berorientasi ISO 9001:2015, penguatan kapasitas sumber daya manusia secara berkelanjutan, serta penguatan program unggulan Markaz Tahfizh dan Markaz Syariah. Strategi tersebut berkontribusi terhadap pencapaian akreditasi A, peningkatan jumlah santri, prestasi santri di bidang tahfidz dan akademik, serta daya saing lembaga di tingkat regional. Tantangan yang masih dihadapi meliputi ketersediaan tenaga pendidik profesional dan efisiensi pengelolaan keuangan. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan penguatan sistem monitoring dan evaluasi berbasis data serta diversifikasi sumber pendanaan untuk menjamin keberlanjutan inisiatif strategis.



Kata kunci: *perencanaan strategis; mutu pendidikan; daya saing lembaga; pondok pesantren; Minhajul Haq*

A. INTRODUCTION

Pondok pesantren as a distinctive Islamic educational institution in Indonesia continues to face increasing demands for adaptation to contemporary challenges while preserving its traditional scholarly roots and Islamic values. In an era marked by intensifying competition among educational institutions, rapid digital transformation, and evolving societal expectations regarding graduate competencies, strategic educational planning has become an indispensable instrument for ensuring institutional quality and long-term competitiveness (Bryson, 2018; IIEP-UNESCO, 2025). Strategic planning in education involves a systematic process of analyzing internal and external environments, formulating a shared vision and mission, setting measurable long-term goals, and allocating resources effectively to achieve desired outcomes (David & David, 2017).

Previous studies on strategic planning in Islamic educational institutions have highlighted the importance of integrating religious values with modern management principles. Research by Mastuhu (2020) and Azra (2019) emphasized that pesantren must develop adaptive planning frameworks that balance tradition and modernity. Studies on quality improvement in madrasah and pesantren (Adha et al., 2019; Sallis, 2014) demonstrated that data-driven planning and continuous quality improvement significantly influence institutional performance. However, most existing research has focused on well-established traditional pesantren or large modern Islamic schools. Limited attention has been given to relatively young pesantren that are still in the process of consolidating their institutional identity while pursuing rapid quality enhancement and competitive positioning.

Pondok Pesantren Minhajul Haq Purwakarta, located in Kampung Pasir Muncang, Desa Pusakamulya, Kecamatan Kiarapedes, Kabupaten Purwakarta, represents an interesting case. Established around 2018 under Yayasan Minhajul Haq, the institution offers integrated formal education (MTs and MA) combined with intensive tahfidz programs and diniyah education based on the manhaj of Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah. Its vision is to become a quality educational institution that produces comprehensive Muslims (muslim kaffah) who are globally oriented, independent, and excellent in Islamic sciences and Arabic language. Despite its relatively short history, the pesantren has pursued ambitious quality targets, including the application of quality management principles and the development of flagship programs (Markaz Tahfizh and Markaz Syariah).

A research gap exists regarding how strategic educational planning is formulated and implemented in young, rapidly developing pesantren that simultaneously pursue traditional Islamic excellence and modern quality standards. This study addresses that gap by examining the strategic planning processes at Pondok Pesantren Minhajul Haq Purwakarta, identifying the key strategies employed, and analyzing their contribution to institutional quality and competitiveness. The unit of analysis is the institutional-level strategic planning process and its outcomes. The article is structured as follows: the method section describes the research design and procedures; the results and discussion section presents the findings and interprets them in light of existing literature; and the conclusion summarizes the main contributions and offers practical recommendations.

B. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a single-case study design. The case study method was selected because it allows an in-depth examination of a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, particularly when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident (Yin, 2018). The research was conducted at Pondok Pesantren Minhajul Haq Purwakarta over a period of six months. The researcher's presence as a key instrument involved prolonged engagement, careful observation, and reflective interaction with participants to gain a holistic understanding of the strategic planning processes.

Key informants were selected purposively based on their strategic roles and knowledge of institutional planning. They included the foundation leader (ketua yayasan), the madrasah principal (kepala madrasah), the vice principal for curriculum affairs, the coordinator of the tahfidz program, and several senior teachers (ustadz) who had been involved in planning and implementation activities. The distribution of informants is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Research Informants and Their Roles

No.	Informant Code	Position / Role	Focus of Information
1	I-1	Ketua Yayasan	Vision, strategic direction, policy
2	I-2	Kepala Madrasah	Operational planning, quality
3	I-3	Waka Kurikulum	Curriculum integration, evaluation
4	I-4	Koordinator Tahfidz	Markaz Tahfizh program strategy
5	I-5	Ustadz Senior (3 persons)	Implementation, challenges, culture

Data collection techniques comprised in-depth semi-structured interviews, participatory observation of planning meetings and educational activities, and document analysis of strategic plans, vision-mission statements, accreditation reports, curriculum documents, and performance records. Data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Credibility of the findings was strengthened through triangulation of sources and techniques, member checking with key informants, and prolonged engagement in the field.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Process of Strategic Educational Planning

The strategic educational planning process at Pondok Pesantren Minhajul Haq Purwakarta is conducted in a participatory manner. Planning begins with a comprehensive analysis of the internal environment (strengths in integrated curriculum, commitment to tahfidz, and existing facilities) and the external environment (competition among modern pesantren in West Java, national accreditation demands, and the need for digital transformation). The institutional vision and mission serve as the primary reference for formulating five-year strategic goals. Annual operational plans are derived from these

strategic goals and are reviewed periodically through internal evaluation meetings involving the foundation board, madrasah leadership, and senior teachers. The overall process can be illustrated as shown in Figure 1.

1. Environmental Analysis (Internal & External)	2. Vision–Mission Alignment	3. Goal Setting & Strategy Formulation	4. Implementation & Resource Allocation	5. Monitoring, Evaluation & Feedback
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Figure 1 Strategic Educational Planning Cycle at Pondok Pesantren Minhajul Haq

Main Strategic Pillars

Several interrelated strategic pillars were identified. These pillars and their key indicators are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2 Main Strategic Pillars and Key Indicators

No.	Strategic Pillar	Key Indicators / Activities
1	Integrated Curriculum Development	Combination of Kemenag curriculum, diniyah, and graded tahfidz; Markaz Tahfizh & Markaz Syariah as flagship programs
2	Quality Management System	Orientation toward ISO 9001:2015; continuous improvement; internal quality assurance
3	Human Resource Capacity Building	Training, mentoring, selective recruitment of ustadz with dual competence (Islamic scholarship + modern pedagogy)
4	Infrastructure & IT Services	Improvement of dormitory facilities; development of IT-based academic and administrative services
5	Character & Language Excellence	Qudwah hasanah approach; active Arabic language program; spiritual and moral formation

SWOT Summary of Institutional Position

Based on the environmental analysis conducted during the planning process, the institutional position of Pondok Pesantren Minhajul Haq can be summarized in the SWOT matrix presented in Table 3.

Table 3 SWOT Analysis of Pondok Pesantren Minhajul Haq Purwakarta

STRENGTHS (S) • Integrated formal + diniyah + tahfidz curriculum • Strong commitment to Ahlus Sunnah manhaj • Flagship Markaz Tahfizh & Markaz Syariah • A accreditation for formal units • Supportive natural environment (mountain area)	WEAKNESSES (W) • Limited number of highly specialized educators • Financial efficiency still needs improvement • Monitoring & evaluation not fully data-driven • Relatively young institutional age (since 2018) • Dependence on limited funding sources
OPPORTUNITIES (O) • Growing demand for quality tahfidz education • Potential collaboration with universities • Digital transformation support from government • Development of STAI Minhajul Haq • Increasing public interest in modern pesantren	THREATS (T) • Intense competition among modern pesantren • Rapid changes in national education policy • Digital divide and technology cost • Economic pressure on parents/wali santri • Risk of losing traditional identity if over-modernized

Contribution to Quality and Competitiveness

The implementation of these strategies has produced tangible results. The formal education units have achieved A accreditation, reflecting compliance with national quality standards. Student enrollment has shown steady growth, and santri have recorded

achievements in tahfidz competitions as well as academic contests. The combination of strong tahfidz programs, Arabic language proficiency, and formal education credentials has enhanced the competitive position of graduates seeking further studies at preferred universities inside and outside Indonesia. Stakeholders perceive the institution as a serious and quality-oriented pesantren despite its relatively young age. A summary of key quality and competitiveness indicators is presented in Table 4.

Table 4 Key Indicators of Quality and Competitiveness

No.	Indicator	Achievement	Remarks
1	Accreditation status (MTs/MA)	A	National standard met
2	Curriculum integration	Formal + Diniyah + Tahfidz	Distinctive value proposition
3	Flagship programs	Markaz Tahfizh & Syariah	Main differentiation strategy
4	Student achievement (tahfidz/academic)	Regional & national contests	Increasing trend
5	Graduate pathway	Preferred universities (domestic & abroad)	Aligned with institutional mission
6	Stakeholder perception of quality	Positive / competitive	Based on interviews

Remaining Challenges

Despite the progress, several challenges persist. The availability of highly qualified professional educators in certain specialized fields remains limited. Financial management efficiency requires further improvement, as indicated by earlier analyses of the pesantren's financial practices. In addition, the monitoring and evaluation system is still largely conventional and has not fully utilized systematic performance indicators and real-time data analytics.

Discussion

The findings of this study confirm that strategic educational planning in a young pesantren can serve as a powerful lever for quality improvement and competitive positioning when it is grounded in a clear institutional vision and implemented through consistent operational strategies. The participatory nature of the planning process at Minhajul Haq aligns with contemporary recommendations for adaptive and inclusive educational planning (IIEP-UNESCO, 2025; Bryson, 2018). By involving foundation leaders, educators, and other stakeholders, the institution builds ownership and shared commitment to strategic goals.

The emphasis on curriculum integration reflects a broader trend in modern pesantren that seek to combine the strengths of traditional Islamic education with formal schooling requirements (Azra, 2019; Mastuhu, 2020). The dual focus on tahfidz excellence and formal academic credentials provides a distinctive value proposition that enhances institutional attractiveness and graduate competitiveness. This finding supports Porter's (1985) concept of differentiation as a source of competitive advantage, adapted to the context of Islamic educational institutions.

The orientation toward quality management systems is consistent with total quality management principles applied in education (Sallis, 2014). Although full ISO certification may still be a work in progress, the intentional adoption of quality standards signals institutional seriousness and provides a framework for continuous improvement. Previous

studies on madrasah quality improvement (Adha et al., 2019) similarly found that systematic quality planning contributes to better institutional performance.

Nevertheless, the challenges related to human resources and financial efficiency indicate that strategic planning must be accompanied by robust implementation capacity. As noted in the literature on educational planning (IIEP-UNESCO, 2025), the gap between planning and implementation remains one of the most persistent problems in educational systems. Strengthening data-based monitoring and evaluation, as recommended by recent scholarship on evidence-based educational planning, would help close this gap and enable more responsive adjustments to strategic initiatives.

Overall, the case of Pondok Pesantren Minhajul Haq Purwakarta illustrates that even relatively young Islamic educational institutions can achieve meaningful quality gains and competitive positioning through deliberate, vision-driven strategic planning. The findings contribute to the growing body of knowledge on educational management in pesantren settings and offer practical insights for similar institutions seeking to enhance their quality and competitiveness in a dynamic educational landscape.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion, several conclusions can be drawn. First, strategic educational planning at Pondok Pesantren Minhajul Haq Purwakarta is formulated participatively and is firmly anchored in the institutional vision of producing muslim kaffah who are globally oriented, independent, and excellent in Islamic sciences and Arabic. Second, the main strategic pillars—integrated curriculum development, quality management orientation, human resource capacity building, and strengthening of flagship programs—have contributed positively to the achievement of A accreditation, growth in student enrollment, student achievements, and enhanced institutional competitiveness. Third, challenges related to professional human resource availability and financial efficiency require sustained attention.

Practically, the study recommends that the institution strengthen its data-based monitoring and evaluation system, improve financial management efficiency, diversify funding sources, and expand collaborative networks with other quality Islamic educational institutions and higher education partners. Future research could employ comparative case studies of young pesantren or longitudinal designs to examine the long-term impact of strategic planning on learning outcomes and institutional sustainability.

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